

Help Your Child Prepare For Testing



Four assessments are required by the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) as part of the New Mexico Statewide Assessment Program. These are: New Mexico Standards Based Assessment (SBA), New Mexico High School Competency Exam (NMHSCE), New Mexico Alternate Performance Assessment (NMAPA), and the New Mexico English Language Proficiency Assessment (NMELPA).

This year the SBA testing period is from February 25-March 21, 2008. Students in grades 3-8 are tested on Reading, Writing, Mathematics, and Science. The test measures student performance against state standards. Students in the eleventh grade are tested in the areas of Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. The SBA is required under No Child Left Behind (NCLB). As a result, the assessment does affect the school's rating in terms of student participation and performance. The test is offered in both English and Spanish for grades 3-8 in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, and Science. In grade 11, the test is offered in English and Spanish for Reading, Writing, and Mathematics. Science and Social Studies are offered only in English.

During the spring administration, January 14-February 1, 2008, the NMHSCE is given to students in grades 10-13. Adults who have exited the school system and completed all high school coursework but have failed to pass the NMHSCE may return to take one or more subtests up to five additional years beyond grade 12.

The NMAPA is administered from March 10-April 25, 2008. As required by Federal and State laws, students with disabilities must participate in the state assessments. This test is designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities. Eligibility for this assessment is determined by set criteria used by the Individualized Educational Plan team. Similar to the other assessment tests, the results of the NMAPA do affect a school's NCLB rating.

The spring administration, April 14-May 2, 2008, of the NMELPA will test students in grades K-12. It features newly replaced Prereading and Prewriting subtests. The Listening and Speaking subtests for Kindergarten have not changed.

The district and/or schools offer many recommendations to help parents and students prepare for successful testing.

Before the test:

- Get plenty of rest.
- Eat a good breakfast.
- Relax and do the best you can.

During the test:

- Keep a positive attitude, if you start to feel nervous, take a few deep breaths.
- Make sure you put your first and last name on the test.
- When you receive your test, do a quick survey of the subtest so you know how to budget your time.
- Follow directions and ask questions if you don't understand the directions.
- Pace yourself and read the entire question.
- Try to answer the easier questions first.
- If you don't know the answer, skip it and go on with the rest of the test and come back to it later.
- When looking at a difficult question, try to eliminate some of the choices, and then choose the best answer.
- Try to answer every question.
- When answering a question, be sure the number on the answer sheet matches the number of the question you are working on.
- Don't worry if others finish before you; focus on the test in front of you.

At the end of the test:

- Check your answers for mistakes.
- Go back and recheck your answers if you finish before your classmates.
- Make sure you have completed all of the sections.
- Bring a favorite book to read when you are finished with the test.